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APPLICATION FOR PATENT

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TITLE:

METHOD FOR INTERCHANGEABLY

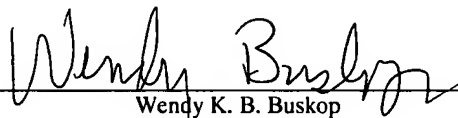
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PROMOTING A BUSINESS ON A HAT

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SPECIFICATION

FIELD

[0001] Embodiments relate to methods for promoting a business on a hat.

BACKGROUND

10 [0002] The present application claims priority to co-pending Provisional U.S. Patent Application Serial No 60/440,139 filed January 15, 2003.

[0003] Pins for hats are known. Clips to hold eyeglasses are known.

15 [0004] U.S. Patent No. 5,422,686 discloses an eyeglass assembly for visored headgear that includes an adjustable clip for attaching the eyeglasses to the visor. The distance between the clips is adjustable, enabling the user to vary the distance between the eyeglasses and the user's eyes. The attachment of the eyeglasses to the visor is relatively insecure. Also, the lens is fixed to posts on a hinge and is therefore not easily replaced. However, this holder is not used to promote a business.

20 [0005] U.S. Patent No. 5,129,102 describes a base having a pair of C-shaped clips attached by VELCRO™ tape to the underside of the bill of a cap. A pair of ordinary sunglasses has cylindrical members that snap into the C-shaped clips to support rotatably the sunglasses. A need exists to use a clip holder as an advertising device.

25 [0006] U.S. Patent No. 4,541,125 describes a holder with a relatively long band having a pair of flat hooks that clip onto the bill of a cap. The center of the band has a bar that supports a C-shaped clip providing a hinge for a set of rotatable eyeglasses. The band is not used for advertising or imprinting in a removable way to advertise a business.

[0007] Thus, a need exists for a method for advertising on apparatus for hands-free holding of an article, such as a pencil, or other device that can be easily attached to and be

5 retained on a baseball style cap, having a bill. A need has existed for a device to have an interchangeable feature so that various logos and businesses can be advertised on the device.

SUMMARY

10 **[0008]** The method for advertising a business entails disposing advertising on a cover of an apparatus for hands-free holding of an article to a hat. The apparatus has a substantially stiff lower clamp for attaching to a hat that has a bill and a crown that covers the head of a user. The apparatus also has a substantially stiff upper clamp for gripping an article such as eyeglasses, sunglasses or other devices. In the
15 preferred embodiment, the substantially stiff lower clamp has a shape contoured to match the juncture of the bill with the crown and a first lower planar surface with serrated teeth designed to grip the underside of the cap bill. The apparatus also has an upper planar surface to provide grip support integral with the first planar surface. Preferably, the upper planar surface is oriented approximately parallel to the first
20 planar surface and, combined with the upper planar surface and the lower planar surface, are situated to grip the bill of the cap firmly. The substantially stiff lower clamp is adapted to removably attach to the bill.

[0009] The substantially stiff upper clamp is designed to be secured integrally to the first planar surface and has a base engaging two arms. The inner arm slides inside the
25 cap. The inner arm has a head side that rests along side the head and a hat side that rests along side the inner part of the cap. The outer arm is substantially parallel to the inner arm support in a spaced apart relationship from the inside support to removably attach to the crown at the hatband portion of the cap.

[00010] The outer arm has a soft outer cover and a smaller middle arm acting as a spring for
30 fixedly attaching sunglasses or the like. The spring is fixedly secured to the outer arm and extends away from the arm substantially parallel to and in a spaced relationship from external side to removably secure an article.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[00011] The present method will be explained in greater detail with reference to the appended figures, in which:

[00012] FIG 1 depicts a perspective view of the cap with bill and holding apparatus;

10 [00013] FIG 2 depicts an exploded view of the clamp used in the apparatus;

[00014] FIG 3 depicts a rear view of the clamp used in the apparatus; and

[00015] FIG 4 depicts a front view of the clamp used in the apparatus.

[00016] The present method is detailed below with reference to the listed Figures.

15 DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[00017] Before explaining the present method in detail, it is to be understood that the method is not limited to the particular embodiments and that it can be practiced or carried out in various ways.

20 [00018] In the presently preferred embodiment, the apparatus for hands-free holding of an article (29) on a hat (4) as used in the method is depicted in FIG 1. The apparatus is shown in more detail in FIG 2, FIG 3, and FIG 4.

[00019] The method entails advertising a business by disposing advertising on a cover of an apparatus for hands-free holding of an article to a hat.

25 [00020] The apparatus is made of a substantially stiff lower clamp assembly (2) and a substantially stiff upper clamp assembly (3). The stiff lower clamp assembly (2) has an inner arm (10) and an outer arm (20). The substantially stiff upper clamp assembly (3) has an inner arm (26) and an outer arm (28) with a soft outer cover (30) and inner spring (32).

- 5 **[00021]** By design, the upper and lower clamp assemblies (2 and 3) provide independent functions. The lower clamp assembly (2) grips the bill of the cap. The upper clamp assembly (3) grips both the hat band and crown of the cap as well as eyeglasses, sunglasses or other devices to be held in place by the clamp. These assemblies are held together by a mechanical connector (40).
- 10 **[00022]** The substantially stiff lower clamp assembly (2) is used to attach to a hat (4) that has a bill (6) and a crown (8) that covers the head (9) of a user. Preferably, the substantially stiff lower clamp has a shape to match the juncture of the bill with the crown. The substantially stiff lower clamp also has a first planar surface (10) with serrated teeth or other friction gripping mechanism either partially or entirely along the surface. The outside arm support is oriented approximately parallel to the first planar surface and, combined with the support arms form the substantially stiff lower clamp, grip a hat bill and also removably attach to the bill.
- 15 **[00023]** The lower clamp (2) can be made from a variety of materials including metal, coated metal, rigid plastic, urethane and combinations thereof.
- 20 **[00024]** The substantially stiff upper clamp assembly (3) also is for gripping the crown (8) of the cap (4) in the hatband area (36) holding in place an article such as sunglasses (29). Preferably, the substantially stiff upper clamp has a shape to match the contour of the crown of the cap and is secured to the lower clamp through integral design and a mechanical connection (40).
- 25 **[00025]** The substantially stiff upper clamp has an inner arm (26) integrally connected to, but separated from, an upper arm (28) by enough space for a cap hat band (36) to intercede. With reference to both FIG 1 and FIG 2, the inner arm (26) has a head side (25) and an inside hat band side (27) and is substantially parallel to the outside support (28) in a spaced apart relationship to attach removably to the crown.
- 30 **[00026]** The inside hat band surface (27) can have serrated teeth (24) or other friction gripping mechanism either partially or entirely along the surface. The outside support arm also has a soft cover (30) and may or may not have a flexible spring (32)

- 5 for gripping an external article. The upper clamp assembly (3) can be made from a variety of materials including metal, coated metal, rigid plastic, polyurethane and combinations thereof. The outside support arm cover (30) can be made of soft rubber, plastic, foam, metal, coated metal or combinations thereof.
- 10 **[00027]** Indicia usable on the cover can be various forms of advertising such as a corporate name, a corporate logo, corporate colors, miniature blinking lights, miniature fiber optic displays that are programmable to show a corporate name, and other similar designs that indicate the source of a service or good. Another type of indicia is artistic representations, such as artwork that is distinctive to a particular artist, such a Wyland whale paintings.
- 15 **[00028]** The soft outer clamp (30) can also include a clear material. The spring (32) could also be imprinted with additional indicia of the type described above. The soft outer clamp (30) and the spring (32) create a “water resistant” method for promoting a business.
- 20 **[00029]** The soft outer clamp arm (30) is secured to the spring (32) for additionally holding the article (29). The soft outer clamp (30) is made of a material that allows printing of various types of indicia or to which various types of indicia may be attached for advertising or promoting business. Examples of indicia are advertising by using trademarks, identifying marks, ornamental structure, designs, patterns, artistic representations and combinations thereof. The soft outer clamp (30) can also
- 25 include a clear material, wherein the inner supporting arm (28) includes similar indicia.
- [00030]** The spring (32) could also be imprinted with additional indicia of the type described above. The soft outer clamp (30) and the spring (32) create a “water resistant” method for promoting a business.
- 30 **[00031]** The spring can have the same miniature lights display or other forms of advertising, trademarks, patterns, artistic representations and combinations. Indicia could be use on both structures, such as in an overlay fashion, for use in the novel method. The

5 miniature lights or miniature light display can be conventional fiber optic battery operated miniature lights or fiber optic battery operated miniature displays, such as those in “n” gauge train gardens, and are powered by watch size batteries.

10 [00032] In the most preferred embodiment, the inner planar surface (27) of the inner arms (10 and 26) of both clamp assemblies have a lower female connector (42) that engages an upper male mechanical connector (44). The upper male mechanical connector (44) is attached to the outer arms (20 and 28) of both clamp assemblies. The lower female connector (42) and the upper male connector (44) together comprise a rigid mechanical connection (40) that holds the outer and inner arms of the clamp assemblies together. The apparatus also contemplates that this connection can be a hinge to allow more flexible movement between the upper and lower clamps and between the inner and outer arms of the upper clamp.

20 [00033] In the present apparatus, the upper clamp has a curvilinear shape. Most preferably, the curvilinear shape of the inner arm (26) is the shape of the contour of a head and the curvilinear shape of the outer arm (28) with the outer cover (30) attached is the shape of the contour of the hat..

25 [00034] The outer arm (20) at the base of the lower clamp assembly (2) can include indicia and marking such as advertising using trademarks, identifying marks, ornamental structures, designs, patterns, artistic representations and combinations thereof. Alternatively, the soft outer clamp can also include similar types of indicia. The soft outer clamp can also include the clear material and the spring for indicia

[00035] While this method has been described with emphasis on the preferred embodiments, it should be understood that within the scope of the appended claims, the method might be practiced other than as specifically described herein.